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A WEEK TO FOCUS ON BREASTFEEDING

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Tampa, Fla. – World Breastfeeding Week is August 1-7 and the Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County is encouraging all breastfeeding moms, soon to be moms, families, friends, and employers to understand the importance of breastfeeding.

The theme for this year is Empower Parents: Enable Breastfeeding. “People should know that breastmilk is powerful,” said WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator Charlene Laping. “As expecting mothers plan for the arrival of their little one, part of the planning should include how they are going to feed their baby. Mothers need support from family, friends, and employers to be successful at breastfeeding.”

The Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Taskforce is hosting several Global Big Latch On events. The events will take place on Friday, August 2nd, Saturday, August 3rd, and Sunday, August 4th. More details about the events can be found on the [Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Taskforce website](#).

During a Global Big Latch On event, breastfeeding moms have their babies “latched on” at a specified time. This happens worldwide. Families are encouraged to also celebrate with food, music, games, photos, and more. “This is one way to stay in touch with other mothers and families in the community, while proving how easy breastfeeding is to sustain with community support,” Laping added.

There are many benefits to breastfeeding:

- Mothers that breastfeed their children have a better weight status than moms that use artificial baby milk. They also have a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, breast and ovarian cancer and postpartum depression.
- Children that are breastfed typically score higher on IQ tests and are sick less often. They also have a lower risk for developing respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, asthma, obesity, Type 2 diabetes and SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).
- Mothers of breastfed babies enjoy a special bond through the skin-to-skin contact that breastfeeding involves.

- A breastfeeding family can save approximately \$1,500 per year on formula costs.

For more information about WIC's breastfeeding support in Hillsborough County, call 813-496-BABY (2229) or visit www.FloridaWIC.org.

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